

Burundi MYAP

Gender Equity Promotion in Kirundo, Muyinga and Kayanza Provinces

Case Study



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Acronyms

ODEDIM	Organisation Diocésaine Pour l’Entraide et le Développement Intégral de Muyinga
CDF	Centre de Développement Familial
CGFPs	Acteurs Relais/ Community-based Gender Focal Points
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
FBO	Faith-based organization
FGD	Focus group discussion
GAD	Gender and Development
GBV	Gender-based violence
GoB	Government of Burundi
INGO	International non-governmental organization
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MYAP	Multi-Year Assistance Program
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PNG	Politique Nationale de Genre/National Gender Policy

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Executive Summary

There is a Chinese expression – *the confluence of confirming circumstances* - that things will naturally fall into place when an action is initiated for the right reasons and for the greater good. The Burundi MYAP Gender Equity Promotion is such an example. A deceptively simple, well-designed and sensitively implemented initiative, the Gender Equity Promotion activities succeeded in materially and emotionally transforming the lives of a significant number of married couples and their families. This, in turn, led to social changes within the communities in which MYAP was implemented. Once the notion of gender equity and the resulting improved household relations took root in the minds of a few people, the message spread through the community with speed, resulting in unprecedented change.

This case study documents the success of this Gender Equity promotion initiative, one of a number of interventions intended to ***reduce the chronic and transitory food insecurity of vulnerable populations*** in targeted areas of three provinces under the USAID/Food for Peace funded Burundi MYAP¹. The four-year program targeted populations in Kayanza, Kirundo and Muyinga provinces suffering from food insecurity and environmental degradation rendering households at risk to economic, climatic and environmental shocks.

The gender equity promotion was part of a larger set of resilience-building interventions that encouraged households to ***efficiently manage their assets in an equitable manner*** through consultation and joint-decision making regarding household resources.

The project's gender equity promotion model was based upon cascading gender trainings and sensitization sessions facilitated by community volunteers called *acteurs relais* or Community-Based Gender Focal Points (CGFPs). These focal points were selected by their own communities as highly-regarded role models. Trained in gender concepts and an experiential and exploratory approach and methodology in June 2009, the CGFPs – four-to-five per *colline*² – embarked on an intensive period of awareness-raising, gender training and counseling. In addition to organized community sensitization sessions, the CGFPs also provided household mediation to families in distress with the encouragement of local leaders. To promote further the concept of gender equity, other members of the community came forward as Positive Deviants, or positive role models. These Positives Deviants' lives and households had undergone major changes as a result of putting into practice gender equity messages. They volunteered to give testimonials, act as role models, and support the CGFPs in training.

In a very short space of time of six to nine months, a significant proportion of households of the targeted communities had begun changing their behavior. Breaking the traditional patterns of gendered division of labor, men began working alongside their wives cultivating their plots, assisting with other household tasks. Most importantly, couples were consulting each other, planning together and making joint decisions about their assets, income, and wellbeing of their children.

¹ The MYAP's program manager is Katherine Overcamp (katherine.overcamp@crs.org). Please direct questions on this case study to her.

² A *colline*, or hillside, is the lowest administrative level in Burundi. There are 300-500 households per *colline*.

By the end of 2011, the depth and scale of the gender intervention's impact became increasingly apparent to MYAP staff and outside observers. The MYAP final evaluation in April 2012 recommended that the approach be further documented in a case study for learning purposes in Burundi and beyond, noting the strength and the impact of the gender equity promotion.

To strengthen the case study, an outside consultant conducted a household survey, interviews, and discussions with a variety of different stakeholders including Government of Burundi officials, *colline* chiefs, CGFPs, Positives Deviants and other community members. The goal of the case study was to assess the following among MYAP households:

- Extent of contact with project,
- Change in roles and responsibilities of spouses and children, and
- Changes in household food security, accumulated assets, family dynamics and behavior.

The interviews, focus group discussion, and household survey confirmed that the interventions—sensitization, gender training, counseling and mediation—had been highly successful at the household level in supporting families to achieve the following:

- Increased respect for women's work and contribution to domestic wealth,
- Greater food security and better household financial management,
- An increase in tangible assets such as livestock, land, and improved housing,
- Greater domestic harmony,
- Reduction in domestic violence and anti-social behavior,
- Greater care and protection of children, and
- Greater recognition of and support for women's rights.

At the community-level, the intervention supported a significant increase in women's involvement in community activities and associations including greater participation in local politics and a greater sense of civic and social responsibility. At the psycho-social level, the intervention supported a process of individual and collective healing and helped communities reclaim their pride and a sense of self-respect.

These achievements are exceptional by any standards, particularly in such a short time. In recognizing the program's success, it is important to explore the elements of both the design and implementation of the initiative and why the target population was particularly receptive to embracing a new set of values and behavior.

The following elements of the approach and methodology greatly accelerated and enhanced program outcomes:

- Functional and non-threatening approach to promoting gender,
- Careful selection and the dedicated work of community-based gender focal points,
- High quality and careful timing of the staggered gender training,
- Depth and extent of coverage,
- Recruitment of highly-motivated Positive Deviants,

- Intelligent, dedicated and intuitive management,
- Respect for the autonomy and competence of the CGFPs,
- Inclusion of all members of targeted populations, and
- Immediate and palpable results supported by MYAP's technical assistance.

The extent of the success can also be attributed to the readiness and the willingness of the target population to adopt radical changes in their behavior and relationships. This case study suggests that the following characteristics of the population may have acted as drivers of changes in gender relations:

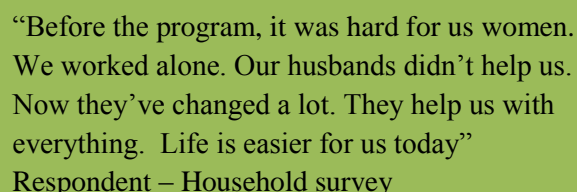
- Greatly impoverished and desperate population,
- High-level of dysfunction at community and household-level,
- Evident degree of shame and a lack of self-respect,
- High-level of oppression of women and girls,
- Desire for redemption after years of civil war, and
- Largely homogeneous and undifferentiated population.

One of the questions asked of this case study and review was how feasible it would be for similar gender equality promotion initiatives to be established as stand-alone programs or paired with other CRS interventions. Although the CGFPs and Positive Deviants strongly believe that such an initiative would be possible as a standalone activity, this project's other activities, including agriculture and nutrition technical assistance and farming inputs, acted as powerful incentives to making changes and accelerating the rate of change. It is important that individuals see some quick returns and benefits to reinforce the value of any changes.

1. Background and Introduction

The following case study hopes to describe and capture the essence of an extraordinarily effective gender equity promotion initiative. The intervention was simple, elegant and highly successful. The findings of the MYAP final evaluation, the research conducted for this report, and project monitoring reports, all point to its effectiveness in strengthening households' capacity to engage in development and to resist environmental and other shocks. The indicators tracked in the course of the program further showed greater numbers of households sensitized and trained as well as increased numbers of women in a variety of different associations (savings and loans, agricultural, social, etc). However, as much as these changes are evidence of fundamental shifts in attitude, they do not speak as authentically and as movingly as the many different accounts and testimonies of the recipients of the gender equity promotion and counseling. These stories tell of people living in great physical, mental and even spiritual suffering, behaving badly towards their families and communities, and ashamed and aimless. As a result of changing their values and their behavior, they were able to recover their self respect, a sense of purpose, rebuild their family lives and are now engaged in developing the family business and assets.

What made it so? What were the individual elements that caused this small intervention (within a much larger program) to inspire and flourish in such a relatively short span of time? In the following chapters, this report considers: the kind and scale of impact of this component on both individual households and on the communities; how the approach and implementation of the gender promotion supported rapid behavior change; and what lessons can be learned and applied to other settings.



“Before the program, it was hard for us women. We worked alone. Our husbands didn’t help us. Now they’ve changed a lot. They help us with everything. Life is easier for us today”
Respondent – Household survey

1.1 The Burundi Multi-Year Assistance Program (MYAP)

The gender equity promotion initiative was an intermediate result of the third strategic objective: “***Vulnerable communities have enhanced resiliency***” under the Burundi Multi Year Assistance Program (MYAP) financed by USAID/Food for Peace and implemented by CRS, International Medical Corps, and two diocesan partners.

The overall goal of the 2008-2011 (extended to 2012 - a 4th year) MYAP was ***to reduce the chronic and transitory food insecurity of vulnerable populations*** in three zones in the provinces of Kayanza, Kirundo and Muyinga.

Kayanza, Kirundo and Muyinga had been designated as priority provinces for addressing food insecurity, with Muyinga and Kirundo provinces being further identified as among the least food secure in the North East. On all indices of food insecurity and absolute poverty, the targeted populations were assessed as extremely vulnerable with little or no material protection against further economic or environmental shocks. At the time the proposal was written, Burundi was

still recovering from an extended civil war. While there was generally greater stability across the country, it was an uneasy peace, affecting communities across the country and further adding to their general insecurity.

Designed as a holistic program, MYAP looked to address the health, agricultural, and environmental needs of agricultural communities. While the first two strategic objectives focused on providing technical expertise and knowledge, the third strategic objective of enhancing resilience recognized the need to build and strengthen coping strategies and mechanisms for community and households to be better able to take advantage of the program resources available and to improve strategies for resisting future shocks that might arise.

The gender promotion activities fell under Intermediate Result 3.2: ***Vulnerable households and other households are efficiently managing their assets in an equitable manner*** and were described in the proposal as follows:

“In order to achieve IR 3.2, the MYAP team will promote mutual decision-making at the household level, economic empowerment of women by raising household and community awareness of the relationship among women’s participation in decision-making at the household level, women’s workloads at home and in the field, and the community’s development potential. The key activities involve sensitization of communities on the importance of gender-balanced responsibilities and mutual decision-making regarding management of household assets, and training community leaders about women’s rights.”

Progress to the achievement of this Intermediate Result was measured against the two outputs:

Output 3.2.1: Women and men understand the importance of mutual decision-making regarding management of household assets.
Output 3.2.2: Female and male community opinion leaders and decision-makers have improved knowledge of women’s rights

Annual program monitoring and reporting tracked women’s involvement in household decision-making and in participation in community associations, particularly agricultural associations.

The key household decisions targeted by the project include:

- Agricultural investments,
- Food expenses,
- Social expenses,
- Sales of crops or livestock, and
- Decisions about credit.

Although the monitoring and reporting processes recorded the growing penetration of the gender promotion activities and project staff were aware of the considerable changes occurring at household level, the depth and scale of the impact of gender activities became overwhelmingly apparent at the beginning of Year 4 (Aug 2011). The final evaluation of the MYAP in April 2012 recognized and documented the impact for an external audience. It was as a result of the findings and recommendations of the final evaluation that CRS decided to document fully the gender component.

1.2 Gender and development

In early discussions with CRS, it was noted that gender equality and its significance in development were not well articulated in the project proposal. Without a clearly expressed gender analysis in project proposals, the “gender and development” approach to implementing gender sensitive and transformative programming is often lost to a cross-cutting indicator that only seeks to ensure a gender-neutral intervention. This case study is an opportunity to look more closely not only at the theoretical basis for gender promotion but also the status of gender relations and women in Burundi.

While not overtly, the MYAP IR 3.2 aligned with one of the key Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) - to *promote gender equality and empower women*. This, the third Millennium Development Goal, is also integral to achieving all of the eight MDGs. The MDG is premised on a “Gender and Development” perspective which *“focuses on analyzing the roles and responsibilities that are socially assigned to women and men, the social relations between women and men, and the opportunities offered to one and the other. It defines gender and the unequal power relations between women and men as essential categories of analysis and provides a framework to re-examine all social, political and economic structures and development policies from the perspective of gender relations”*³.

The gender promotion intervention was informed not only by a GAD approach but by CRS’s “gender responsiveness” approach which derives from its moral and philosophical position enshrined in Catholic Social Teaching.

In recent years, since the MYAP was developed, CRS has reviewed its work as well as its gender analysis and planning tools in a series of documents^{4 5}. Again, it is noteworthy that the guidelines suggested in these documents are largely consonant with those followed in MYAP’s gender promotion.

In the discussion of approaches and frameworks, particularly in the context of Burundi (where the debate revolves around the oppression of women and the full attainment of their rights), the critical role of men in families for the well-being of children, women, and of the men themselves is sometimes forgotten. The MYAP intervention is predicated on men’s involvement in the “private sphere” of the household and family and is treated as crucial to economic and social development as the involvement of women in the “public sphere” of community participation and decision-making. Successful development projects promoting women’s participation outside the home have been aided by support from sympathetic men. In the absence of such support, the potential benefits for women, children and men themselves are jeopardized.

“My sister was divorced by her husband. My father and my brothers, we wouldn’t give her land or a place to stay. She left the village, drifted for several years, had a child and struggled to survive. After my brothers and I received training on women’s rights, we called her home to the village and gave her an equal portion of our father’s land” Male Respondent

1.3 Gender issues in Burundi

³ Gender and Development Plan of Action, FAO 2003

⁴ Julie Ideh et al; Gender The Key to Successful Development Programming March 2010

⁵ CRS Southern Africa Guidelines for Gender-Responsive Programming 2010

Change in gender relations at the grass-roots and community level need to be understood in the national context. Despite efforts to address women's subordination by changes in policy and legislation, Burundi remains one of several countries in the region where women experience systematic discrimination and oppression. The Social Institutions and Gender Index⁶ ranked Burundi as 50 out of 102 in the 2009 Index and ranked 51 out of 86 in the 2012 Index with the following examples of how women's rights are limited and contingent:

Key aspects of family life (such as matrimonial arrangements, succession, legacies and gifts related to marriage) are still governed by customary law despite the *Politique Nationale de Genre PNG* and changes in legislation. Article 122 of the Code of the Person and the Family provides that the male is the head of the household, thereby codifying the unequal position of women in the family. There is currently no law that specifically provides for equal inheritance rights. Inheritance is largely governed by customary laws that discriminate against women. Under customary law, a rural woman cannot inherit from her father or her husband.

Burundian society power structures or "hierarchies of status, decision-making, rule making and enforcement, resource access and control and gender relationships" are demonstrably patriarchal and patrilineal⁷. Burundi culture and institutions have tended to re-enforce and maintain girls' and women's vulnerability and insecurity despite the incremental changes in policy and increased access to education. In general, girls and women have little influence on decisions about their own lives. For most women in Burundi, particularly married women, the work they do, the money and resources they are allowed, and what they can purchase are determined by a husband, father or brother.

The current situation of women in Burundi has to be understood in relation to thirteen years of civil unrest. Gender relations are profoundly affected by civil war or any conflict, as Susan McKay says, "Post-conflict societies merit special attention in terms of how well they meet girls' and women's human security needs since they are subject to pervasive lawlessness, social dislocation and, often, intense violence."⁸

Yet years of direct and indirect violence due to protracted internal conflict have also taken their toll on men. Uncertainties about the future, a depressed economy, and the lack of investigation or punishment for most war crimes have all profoundly affected men. This can be witnessed in dysfunctional and anti-social behavior: abuse of alcohol and drugs, violence in general and domestic violence. The extent of the success of MYAP's gender equity promotion is best appreciated when set against a prevailing patriarchal culture and the aftermath of profound civil strife.

2. Intervention

⁶ The Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) was first launched by the **OECD Development Centre** in 2009 as a innovative measure of the underlying drivers of gender inequality for over 100 countries. Instead of measuring gender gaps in outcomes such as employment and education, the SIGI instead captures discriminatory social institutions, such as early marriage, discriminatory inheritance practices, violence against women, son preference, restricted access to public space and restricted access to land and credit.

⁷ McKay, Susan. *Women, Human Security, and Peace-building: A feminist Analysis*. IPSHU English Research Report Series, Conflict and Human Security: A Search for New Approaches of Peace-Building, no. 19 2004.

⁸ Ibid.

The MYAP gender equity promotion intervention effectively began in May 2009 with the selection of the “*Acteurs Relais*,” or Community Gender Focal Points (CGFPs). They were to be the primary contact with the communities for the intervention and their selection was highly strategic and carefully conducted. Chosen by the communities themselves, CGFPs were householders: men and women regarded as responsible and upstanding members of the

Selection criteria for Community Gender Focal Points

- Willing to work as a volunteer
- Noted for good character
- Capable of taking training and training others
- Able to hold gender sensitization sessions
- Willing to follow up emerging Positive Deviants through to their first public testimony
- Willing to travel to other collines to hold sensitization meetings
- Accepted and well regarded by the community
- An advocate for human rights

community. There were several criteria for their selection as shown in the text box. Crucially, the selected CGFPs were to work as volunteers with no perquisites such as transport or any other motivation payment.

The program identified an experienced CRS staff to lead gender activities in addition to all community facilitation activities in Kirundo province. She had experience of promoting gender equality with a prior USAID-funded Livelihoods project which served as the pilot for many of MYAP’s gender interventions. The selection of the approach and the content of training modules were based on that experience.

In June and July 2009, the gender coordinator conducted initial trainings, training MYAP project staff followed by CGFPs and *chefs de colline*. In Kirundo, four CGFPs were chosen for each *colline*⁹, while five were chosen per colline in Muyinga and in Kayanza provinces.

This first three-day training focused on concepts of gender and gender and development. Equally important was the training methodology and approach which the CRS facilitators and the CGFPs would follow in their sensitization and training in their respective communities and *collines*. The emphasis and approach was one of exploratory and experiential learning with participants encouraged to learn from each other. This egalitarian learning model and approach (in contrast to the traditional didactic model) became one of the hallmarks of the MYAP’s and the CGFPs own gender training and counseling. One of the strengths of the approach was that CRS staff and CGFP staff worked with community members in a respectful, solicitous, non-judgmental manner. This permitted the space necessary for behavior change and prevented community members and local leaders from feeling alienated.

CRS, along with local administration and the *chefs de colline*, organized the initial community meetings. All members of the community were invited and the CGFPs were introduced to the communities in their new roles. With their newly-acquired gender sensitization and gender skills, they conducted their first meetings from August to October 2009. The manner in which they were conducted was pivotal in the success of the intervention. According to the CGFPs, the public recognition from CRS and local leaders solidified their status. CRS publically took a back seat from the beginning and provided support on an as-needed basis, offering refresher training to those CGFPs who might need it, attending meetings and helping with sensitization on request.

⁹ Colline, meaning hill or hillside is the lowest administrative unit in Burundi

CRS backstopped the CGFPs but the bulk of the work and planning was their own. Thus began a period of intense consciousness raising and training in a number of different forms:

- Small public meetings including role play,
- Visits to individual households, and
- Meetings with groups of householders

Key Gender Equity Messages

- Husbands and wives should respect one another for the contributions they make to household life.
- Household assets, including the harvest, should benefit everyone in the household.
- Household chores are the responsibility of everyone in the household.
- The household can realize benefits by allowing women to join associations.
- Making plans and decisions together improves life for the household.

By a systematic process of household visits, consciousness-raising meetings and the sensitization of opinion leaders, the CGFPs were able to increase coverage within their individual *collines*, working towards a goal of contact with all households. Ensuring coverage of each of the *collines* required the CGFPs to spend many hours travelling to and from households where they engaged in frequently-lengthy household discussions. To achieve this level of coverage was an immense time commitment for the CGFPs, time taken from their own familial and household commitments.

Importantly, the initial three days of gender training intentionally did not include an outright discussion of women's rights. CRS had decided that in the context of deeply traditional communities with entrenched culturally-defined gender roles and systems, the introduction of women's rights would have resulted in resistance at all levels, including from the CGFPs themselves. An extended period of sensitization and practice around the material benefits of changing gender roles and division of labor was necessary preparation in engaging CGFPs in the thornier, more political area of women's rights.

In June 2010, a year after the first training, a trainer from the *Association des Femmes Juristes* (Association of Women Lawyers) trained staff, CGFPs, and *chefs de colline* on women's rights. From this point, the CGFPs slowly began to introduce both the rights of women as well as children into their counseling.

The last training module – mediation and conflict resolution – was provided in the final year of MYAP in November – December 2011. Again, CRS trained CGFPs and *chefs de colline* on counseling and mediation techniques for gender equity. According to the *chefs de colline*, the CGFPs had already been providing counseling for troubled families. This training convinced the

Key Gender Concepts

- Women's triple role (productive, reproductive, community)
- Access and control of assets and resources
- Practical needs and strategic interests
- Participation
- Power
- Equality and equity

chefs de colline that the CGFPs had the necessary skills to mediate disputes, and they increasingly referred families in dispute to the CGFPs.

As the sensitization cascade training process took off, the CGFPs noted an increasing number of individuals during sensitization meetings who publically announced themselves as someone needing help and counseling (and whose behavior matched that described as destructive to domestic harmony), who would approach CGFPs after meetings as in need of help and advice, or who as a result of a visit from the CGFPs would have an immediate and strong desire for change. These individuals and their households were counseled, supported and followed up. They often voluntarily come to meetings to support the CGFPs. CRS recognized an opportunity to expand both the coverage and influence of the gender promotion activities.

With considerable astuteness on the part of the Gender Coordinator and her team of animators, CRS staff asked at community meetings for those individuals to identify themselves if they felt that the gender promotion activities had particularly affected them, changing their lives and that of their families. These people then became the new cadre of community members able to support the CGFPs. They began giving testimony about substantial and measurable changes in their quality of life on a material and emotional level as a result of changing their behavior, patterns and division of domestic labor, and re-evaluating their domestic gender relations. They offered themselves as role models and spurs for change: “I did it and so can you.” After a period of follow-up of between six months to a year, these individuals were given the title of “Positive Deviant” and were later publically acknowledged and awarded certificates in ceremonies held by a member of the communal administration.

The Centre de Développement Familial (CDF) is the government department tasked with the protection of women and children. Although the CDF personnel were not included in the first round of planning and training, CDF staff at the provincial and commune levels were included in the meetings and discussions around the sustainability of what was increasingly apparent a remarkably effective intervention.

3. Methodology

In planning the documentation of the MYAP gender promotion component, it was noted that the final evaluation had collected valuable anecdotal information; testimonies of couples, meetings with GoB officials, discussions with CGFP and Positive Deviants on the successes of the intervention. However, due to the absence of any baseline data, it was difficult to quantify the extent of the success. The process of documenting the intervention provided an opportunity to gather more detailed information by the following methods:

- a) A household survey,
- b) Guided group discussions with four sets of key informants:
 - Community Gender Focal Points,
 - Positive Deviants,
 - *Chefs de Colline*
 - Women members of local associations

c) Collection of comparative data on the below indicators. Positive Deviant testimonials often mentioned improvement on these indicators as a result of the gender intervention:

- School enrollment and attendance;
- Gender-based violence (GBV) charges coming to court;
- Marriage registration

3.1 Household survey

The household survey was conducted in ten *collines* in two provinces: Kirundo and Muyinga. Four teams of enumerators conducted the survey, each team including one CGFP and one project staff person. Including CGFPs and project staff rather than outside enumerators created a participatory process of data collection, encouraging organizational learning.

The semi-structured questionnaire included four sections covering:

- Background information (details of informants and household),
- Extent of contact with project,
- Change in roles and responsibilities of spouses and children, and
- Changes in household food security, accumulated assets, in family dynamics and behavior.

Sixty questionnaires were administered over the course of three days. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Annex 1.

Two provinces were included in the survey: Kirundo and Muyinga. Tables 1 and 2 show the location of the survey:

Table 1 – Survey locations in Kirundo

Colline	Sous Colline
Muramba	Gashoka
Kiyanza	Kiruhura
Kavomo	Ruhita
Kinyangurube	Gisenyi

Table 2 - Survey locations in Muyinga

Colline	Sous Colline
Kinyami	Mudida
Gishambusha	Migina Mihama
Busasa	Busasa
Muzingi	Rurimpfizi
Rugerero	Burima Kigaroma
Gisebeyi	Migina Mumanga Murago

3.2 Guided Group Discussions

The group discussions focused on the various experiences relevant to each of the groups. Discussions included the personal experiences of individual informants, strengths of the program, observed and tangible changes and sustainability.

3.3 Limitations of the study

- Time did not permit data collection and surveying of Kayanza province. Although a representative sampling was carried out in Kirundo and Muyinga, it is recognized that the Kayanza program area has population and geographic characteristics not shared with the other two provinces.
- Difficulties were encountered in the collection of GoB data. Some data provided at the commune level proved difficult to aggregate and thus could not be used to assess changes at *colline* and *sous-colline* levels

4. Findings

4.1 Household survey

4.1.1 Characteristics of the population

Table 3 describes the population surveyed. The majority of households were between 5-7 members. Most the households were nuclear family households rather than housing an extended family. Burundi society is patri-local, thus most wives (82%) were not from their *colline* of residence. Of note, 23% of couples had registered their marriages since the start of MYAP. Registration of marriage offers greater legal protection to a woman and her children in the event of divorce or death of the husband.

Table 3 - Characteristics of the population

Characteristics of the population	
Mean size of household	5.3 mean (6 median)
Mean age of women respondents	35
Mean age of men respondents	43
Mean years married	16
Number of marriages registered (of 43 respondents)	36 (78%)
Number of marriages registered since 2009	10 (23%)
No. of women from the colline of residence	8 (18%)
No. of men from the colline of residence	35 (80%)

Table 4 analyses the extent and penetration of the promotion activities. 93% of households interviewed had received some form of sensitization or training and 80% had received visits from CGFPs.

Table 4 - Kind and extent of contact with MYAP Gender Equity promotion

Kind and Extent of Contact with MYAP Gender Equity Promotion
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No. and % received message	41 (93%)			
Year of 1 st contact	2009	2010	2011	2012
	18 (42%)	12 (30%)	6(14%)	3 (7%)
Source of 1 st contact	CGFP	CRS Focal Point (FP)		CGFP + CRS FP
	19 (45%)	11(26%)		10(23%)
Content of initial message	Harmony and mutual respect			19(45%)
	Importance of good household management			9(20%)
	Dialogue and joint-decision making			7(16%)
	Ceasing anti-social behavior (reduction in drinking and fighting)			7(16%)
	Share work and assets			5(12%)
% who received training	93%			
Key messages from training	Household chores are the responsibility of everyone in the household			33 (77%)
	Making plans and decisions together will make life better for the household			15 (35%)
	Household assets, including the harvest, are to benefit everyone in the household.			7 (16%)
Key messages about women's rights	Right to freedom of speech			18 (42%)
	Right to belong to an association			15(35%)
	Right to take political and/or administrative office			6 (14%)
	Right to not be beaten			5(12%)
No and % household who received visits from CGFP	35 (80%)			

4.1.2 Changes in Roles and Responsibilities of spouses and children

Table 5 - Numbers and Percentage of male respondents now engaged in the following tasks since gender equity promotion

Kind of work	Contribution since sensitization and training
Farm work	33 (76%)
Food preparation	9 (20%)*
Wood collection	12 (30%)
Water Collection	14 (33%) *
Child care	17 (40%)

* A percentage said they do these task if wife ill or unavailable.

As seen in Table 5, men's increased contribution to farming and agricultural work with 76% of male respondents now actively and substantially engaged in cultivation is the most noticeable change in the distribution and division of labor. Men have also increased their contribution to domestic work, but to a more limited extent, and many men said they would help in tasks such as water collection and food preparation as necessary (if wife was tired or ill). However, they increased their contribution to food processing through shopping for food, bringing in crops and collecting firewood.

Although men said they were making a much bigger contribution to child care, this was in relation to taking children to school or to the clinic and providing resources and money for children's needs. Women continue to do most child care duties.

While 63% of couples said that they now made joint decisions around buying and selling and particularly around selling of surplus subsistence crops, 14% of men stated that they were still primarily responsible for selling high value cash crops such as bananas.

The general view of couples interviewed was that their shared work and joint-decision making made for greater domestic productivity, i.e. they were now satisfied with the division of labor.

An interesting finding was the change in children's work. Couples noted that when they weren't working together, the children were not doing much and "going wild." Now, children were contributing to the household work.

4.1.3 Changes in household food security, accumulated assets and family dynamics

Table 6 - Changes in food security and assets

Improved diet – increased meals	Ownership of livestock and poultry	Increased purchasing power – tools, clothes etc	Increased land ownership or use	Improved seeds and farming technology	Improved health
33 (76%)	26 (60%)	16 (37%)	12(28%)	11(26%)	7(16%)

Table 6 shows changes in food security and assets that respondents attributed to the gender equity promotion. Increased food security and improved diet was the most noted. Of the 76%, 8 (25%) stated that their food consumption had increased from one to two meals a day.

Two of the key changes noted: ownership of livestock and improved seed and farming technology need to be recognized as supported by other MYAP components and efforts e.g. the provision of hybrid goats, availability of improved farming inputs and technical assistance. However, it can be argued that the gender equity promotion increased the capacity of families to benefit from MYAP inputs. The purchase of land and livestock, the rental of land and the rebuilding of houses can be regarded as independent household initiatives and not due to MYAP direct support.

Further, it is the change in relationships which allows all members of household to benefit from inputs. This is particularly notable in the extent of improved household diet where all family members are benefiting from increased agricultural production.

Table 7 lists what the survey respondents cited as the most valued changes in their household and/or in the dynamics of the household. In coding the results, a distinction was made between the most valued change: increased assets as a result of collaboration and joint-decision making versus simply "increased assets." In the first instance, it is the process as well as the result that is valued. While material benefits were regarded as extremely valuable and important, it is the improvement in inter-personal relations, self esteem, and quality of life that were the most cited benefits.

Table 7 - Eight most valued changes in household and household dynamics

Most valued changes	
Increased assets as a result of joint- decision making	15 (35%)
Domestic peace and harmony	14 (33%)
Increased assets	13 (30%)
No more drunkenness	9 (20%)
No more domestic violence/ wife-beating	7 (16%)
Mutual respect	7 (16%)
Improved circumstances and relationship with children	7 (16%)
Increased agricultural production	7(16%)

Many other examples of valued changes were noted, many of which were affective changes and examples of an improved marital relation: -

- “My wife looks 15 years younger and healthy.”
- “We share our joys and sorrows now.”
- “We are happy.”
- “We are having sexual relations again.”

In comparing changes in behavior and changes in wealth, relatively small changes in behavior – increasing contribution to agricultural production, communication and joint decision-making - have generated enormous material and emotional capital and family well-being.

What the tables and the figures do not capture but which clearly emerges from the overall findings of the interviews is that families have bridged a remarkable divide from states of misery, depression, and social dysfunction to states of high functioning well-being and productivity. This case study argues that this change is the result of recognizing the value and benefits of gender equality and equity and changing social behavior within households.

4.1.4 Participation in community associations

Women’s participation in community associations was one of the outcome indicators of this component of the MYAP. 76% of women interviewed now belonged to an association when previously most had not been allowed it, which is an immense accomplishment. However, for those who do not belong to an association, it was their own choice not a restriction imposed by their husbands, with the exception of two women.

Table 8 - Numbers of respondents now members of community associations

Gender of respondent	Member of an association
Women	33 (76%)
Men	16 (37%)

4.2 Focus Group Discussions

The focus group discussions with CGFPs, Positive Deviants, and *chefs de colline* largely reiterated and confirmed the findings of the final evaluation and the household survey. The

discussions tended to be testimonies of personal change or changes witnessed. However, there were some specific and relevant general findings from each of the three groups.

4.2.1. Community Gender Focal Points

The CGFPs had enjoyed profound changes in their own lives and applying what they had learnt to their own domestic situation had greatly improved their happiness and material assets. As a result of their conviction and experience, they had become “missionaries” for gender equity promotion. They stated that they wanted to share the message.

They noted the following as measures of success:

- Children in the community leading better lives and attending school,
- Reduction in domestic violence and gender-based violence (GBV),
- Increasing numbers of women (and men) in savings and loan associations,
- Reduction in drunkenness, and
- Better sexual relations as women are not so tired

The CGFPs stated that they would continue with their work now that MYAP has finished. They had worked independently for much of the program life and thus felt confident that they would continue to work as CGFPs to train, counsel and mediate households in their communities.

4.2.2 Positive Deviants

The training had “liberated them and their communities from tradition” and moved them and their communities “from the bottom rung of society.” They felt that the training had gone beyond the broad scope of gender equity and had touched all aspects of people’s lives. They believed that the strength of the training was not only the messages they learnt but how to transmit these messages in a way that would make people listen. This was particularly true when they conducted household visits and training.

The success of the gender equity promotion was as result of:

- High quality and convincing training,
- Individual household counseling and follow-up,
- Active support of *chefs de colline*,
- Active support and follow up by MYAP CRS and partner staff
- Positive Deviants are good examples of changes

They had fully absorbed and integrated the notion that development requires both women and men. They also fully recognized how much women do and contribute. One of the Positive Deviants, when talking about how much women did and how changes in behavior had made such a difference, stated that the training and work had made him want to persuade everyone to make changes in their household. He said, “We are zealots.”

4.2.3. Chefs de colline

All four colline chiefs were very enthusiastic about the gender equity promotion and spoke about the improvements and changes that they themselves had made in their own households.

Additionally, they had noted similar changes and improvements in their communities which include:

- Reduction in domestic disputes and violence,
- Better-maintained fields and watersheds,
- Reduced migration for casual labor and artisanal mining,
- Men helping with all agricultural and domestic tasks,
- Respect for the property rights of daughters, and
- Greater presence of women in associations and at political meetings.

They argued that the success was a result of:

- Regular home visits and follow up;
- Refresher courses and training for CGFPs and Positive Deviants;
- High level of subordination of women¹⁰

4.2.4 Women members of associations

Women described their experience of married life prior to the gender equity promotion. They generally and individually talked about how narrow their lives were before the gender activities. They stated that:

- They worked all the time with little or no opportunity for other pursuits,
- They fought with their husbands over money, lack of food or their husband's behavior,
- They were not given any cash from sale of crops and therefore had no disposable income, and
- They had no social life and were not allowed to join associations.

Since their households had received training, they noted the following changes in their households:

- Domestic relations had changed dramatically;
- They were now able to speak freely at home and in public and voice their opinions;
- Allowed to sell cash crops and items (bananas and beer) and able to purchase household goods;
- Financial transparency as well as joint-decision making;
- Reduction in partners drinking and wife beating,
- Children properly clothed and in school,
- Taking responsibility not only for one's own family and children but also for those of neighbors';
- Reduction in beating of children.

¹⁰ Prior to the gender equity promotion efforts, women were carrying such a disproportionate level of the workload and domestic responsibility. Thus it was both easier to demonstrate the injustice of this extreme level of subordination and for relatively small changes in the distribution of work and resources for change to be felt.

The women also talked about how everyone was passing information and training to others, even outside of the MYAP areas.

4.3 Quantitative data collection

During field work, it was possible to collect data from GoB sources that demonstrated changes at the household and community level. These include data on incidence of domestic violence, school attendance and registration of marriages.

4.3.1 Reduction in the incidence of domestic violence

Supporting the findings of both focus group discussions (FGDs) and the household survey, the data supplied by the Kirundo Commune office shows a steady reduction in domestic violence in three of the collines where gender equity has been promoted. Table 9 shows the incidence of domestic violence reported in three collines in Kirundo. Comparing the incidence of domestic violence over the four years, there appears to have been a steady decline in reported cases. Kiyanza, Kavomo and Muramba collines reported a 40%, 35% and 53% reduction respectively in instances of GBV. Domestic violence cases reported through June 2012 suggest that the trend of decreasing levels of domestic violence is continuing.

Table 9 - Incidence of domestic violence in Kirundo

Collines	2009	2010	2011	2012 (Up to June)
Kayanza	20	12	8	3
Kavomo	17	10	6	3
Muramba	15	11	8	2

4.3.2 Improvements in school attendance

Although there are other variables to be considered when looking at school attendance, it is nevertheless possible to see that school enrollment figures appear to have increased with some reduction in school drop-out rates. Tables 10 and 11 show enrollment and dropout rates for 2009-2010 and 2011-2012. Table 10 gives dropout rates numerically and as a percentage. Muramba, Kiyanza and Kavomo collines show high drop-out rates in 2009-2010. Table 11 shows not only the dropout rates but the percentage increase in enrollment. As Table 11 indicates, there has not been an overall decrease in the dropout rates, but there have been major reductions have been recorded in two collines. These figures are deceptive due to the significant increase in enrollment in all five of the schools recorded. Thus, for example, while Kavomo 2011-2012 data records a slightly higher dropout rate of 16% compared to 15% recorded in 2009-2010, the school enrollment rate has increased by 23%.

To explore whether there was a statistically valid reduction in dropout rate for girls and for all pupils, a comparison of proportions was done using a *z* test analysis. In the case of Muramba and Kiyanza *collines*, there is quite strong evidence and very strong evidence respectively of a true difference in proportions ($2xp = 0.01596$ and $p < 0.001$). In the case of Kavomo, there was no evidence of a change. In the instances of Yaranda and Mwenya, there was an increase in dropout

rate ($p=0.00842$ and $p<.001$). However, any further in-depth analysis of enrollment and dropout rates need to be disaggregated by grade levels and set against provincial and national averages.

Table 10 - Enrollment and drop-out rate as a percentage of enrollment – Kirundo 2009-2010

School	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Start	End	Start	End	Start	End
Muramba	690	537 (22%)	572	430 (25%)	1262	967 (24%)
Kiyanza	438	355 (19%)	344	219 (37%)	782	574 (27%)
Kavomo	299	251 (16%)	318	279 (12%)	617	530 (15%)
Yaranda	411	382 (8%)	371	363 (2%)	782	745 (5%)
Mwenya	339	300 (12%)	282	283 (0%)	621	583 (8%)

Table 11 - Enrollment and drop-out rate as a percentage of enrollment – Kirundo 2011-2012

School	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Start	End	Start	End	Start	End
Muramba	707	624 (12%)	693 (+18%)	598 (14%)	1400 (+9%)	1222 (13%)
Kiyanza	566	467 (17%)	420 (+12%)	348 (11%)	986 (+11%)	809 (18%)
Kavomo	392	308 (21%)	404 (+22%)	360 (11%)	796 (+23%)	668 (16%)
Yaranda	494	451 (9%)	424 (+12%)	398 (6%)	918 (+15%)	849 (13%)
Mwenya	425	339 (20%)	345 (+12%)	322 (7%)	770 (+20%)	661 (14%)

Increase in registration of marriage

Confirming the findings of the household survey, visits to the registrar's offices in Muyinga and Kirundo provinces yielded the following data. The registration of marriages has increased by more than 100% in several of the zones. Encouraging registration of marriage was both an initiative of the GoB as well as MYAP gender equity promotion.

Table 12 – Registration of marriages - 2009 and 2012 - Muyinga Province

Zone	2009			2012		
	Jan	Feb	March	Jan	Feb	March
Nyagatore	2	6	13	5	9	8
Gashoho	4	5	10	12	27	25
Gisanze	3	2	13	8	9	15

Table 13 – Registration of marriages - 2009 and 2011 - Kirundo Province

	2009	2011
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Zone	March	April	May	March	April	May
Maramba	8	2	3	36	38	32
Kiyanza	22	3	8	28	25	28
Kavomo	18	10	6	22	16	34
Yaranda	31	17	14	28	38	34
Mwenya	6	6	4	22	18	10

5. Conclusions and Discussion

The Gender Equity Promotion Initiative is exceptional by any measures. The findings of the survey, discussions and data collected for this documentation all confirm that the impact of the fundamental changes that have taken place in domestic relations have been felt at every level: household, community and institutional.

Everyone involved in this endeavor - householders, CGFP, MYAP staff, and external evaluators - has been profoundly moved by what they have witnessed. The impact has surpassed all expectations and has gone well beyond the MYAP expected results of joint-decision making and greater women's participation in community groups. The initiative has increased individual and community resilience to external shocks. Families have more assets and resources, but they also understand these assets to be joint-owned or, if not jointly-owned, to be used for the benefit of all household members collectively and individually. They live in more peaceful and harmonious

"I have reconciled with my son. He is coming home. He ran away. He broke his arm trying to protect his mother when I was beating her." **Respondent of household survey**

households. Women's workloads have decreased, and they are enjoying being part of community life, after having only limited access for most of their lives. Children are eating better, attending school and contributing to the family wealth, no longer neglected or running wild.

With the limitations of the language and discourse of development practice, it is more difficult to discuss the transcendent nature of the intervention. The documentation of this program provides an opportunity to recognize that gender equity promotion, when supported by the will and conviction of many people, can be truly transformational: bringing families back together and helping them repair the emotional, material and sometimes physical damage they have inflicted upon each other.

The initiative has also demonstrated people's great capacity for altruism and caring for each other when they have tools to do so. The CGFPs and Positive Deviants have devoted time and caring to helping other families and households through painful and difficult transitions and they have done so freely and with great kindness.

Very successful and remarkable program interventions are rare. It is more usually the case that at program end, there is evidence of positive change occurring (i.e. newly introduced technologies and approaches are adopted by a percentage of the targeted population, especially those trained directly by project staff) but that these changes are not necessarily happening on a large scale. Practitioners hope that the best interventions and changes take root and develop a life and energy of their own which will extend into the future. What has made the gender promotion component

of the CRS MYAP unique is the speed, the extent and the depth of change that occurred in a short space of time during the life of the project itself. Although not articulated in quite the same fashion, the final evaluation team recognized the extraordinary achievements of this component and thus recommended that this component be more closely examined for lessons learnt and appropriateness for wider application.

In most senses, the findings of this review speak for themselves. The changes have been profound and tangible. What is less clear is why the changes were so dramatic and immediate and what the elements that made them so were. In reviewing the findings, this section looks at the elements of the approach and implementation that encouraged success and the characteristics and status of the communities and targeted households that made them embrace the suggested changes in domestic gender relations and social behavior. It is premised on the notion that change requires not only the opportunity for change (i.e. inputs or supply) but also a readiness for change (i.e. a demand or need, conscious or unconscious).

Approach and implementation

This case study identifies eleven components or aspects to the approach and implementation which have contributed to its success:

1) The framing of the intermediate result

The strength of the intermediate result lies in that it did not aim for an overtly political result. The result did not specify changing gender power relations *per se* but rather on greater participation in decision-making. As described in the proposal:

“3.2: Vulnerable households and other households are efficiently managing their assets in an equitable manner: IR 3.2 will promote mutual decision-making at the household level. IR 3.2 will promote economic empowerment of women by raising household and community awareness of the relationship among women’s participation in decision-making at the household level, women’s workloads at home and in the field, and the community’s development potential.”

The absence of an explicitly rights-based IR meant there was nothing that could be perceived as directly and externally threatening the status quo.

The decision not to conduct any training as suggested in the proposal (blanket sensitization of communities on the importance of gender-balanced responsibilities and mutual decision-making regarding management of household assets) and rather focusing on training carefully identified opinion leaders - the CGFPs – was a strength of the approach in allowing a grassroots approach to develop.

2) Use of CGFPs

The decision to entrust the work of sensitization and counseling to this cadre of dedicated community members was a masterly stroke of genius, if not recognized as such at the time.

The CGFPs have been the backbone of the intervention. Their dedication and their level of effort resulted in all households receiving at least 2-3 visits, with 'difficult' households receiving as many as four visits. In addition, many people would visit the CGFPs in their homes to receive counseling or additional information. This represents an extraordinary time commitment, and this level of volunteer activity and follow-up is extremely rare. They, individually and collectively, have fully adopted the values and principles of gender equality. As a result they owned both the message and the work itself. It is the sense of ownership and responsibility that appears to have created a missionary zeal among CGFPs and ensured that the activities will continue after the life of MYAP.

3) Selection of CGFPs

Looking at the immense contribution the CGFPs have made to radical changes in domestic gender relations, to increased agricultural production, and to wealth creation, their selection was of enormous weight and importance. Wisely, selection was left to the community and the *chefs de colline*, vesting them with authority to act and to be listened to. The selection criteria, according to community members and CGFPs themselves, were primarily in regard to their demonstrated good character, moral integrity, along with a track record of volunteering and care in community. Importantly, it was recognition of their character and standing. Thus, becoming a CGFP was an honor, responsibility and acknowledgement of their worth. Giving extended voluntary public service requires some form of recompense. In the instance of the gender promotion, this was a combination of both the satisfaction of witnessing great changes and the high regard in which they are held.

4) Quality and timing of training

Training was the primary program input for this component of MYAP. According to the gender coordinator, the training model had been used in projects in the general program area with some success. It was a training model with which the gender coordinator was familiar and it made sense to go with known content and material rather than to embark on an untried model. Additionally, CARITAS was able to provide a trainer to conduct the first training who was available to provide the full complement of training i.e. 3 days of training for staff.

The effectiveness of the training is judged by the ease and rapidity with which the training was cascaded down to large numbers of households and community members. Neither the CGFPs nor the CRS facilitators were experienced trainers. The content and the approach adopted in the training was of a kind and a quality – experiential and exploratory – that allowed participants to build on their own experience and in turn use that to train others. The content and topics covered in the first gender training in particular were seen as accessible and immediately relevant.

Staggering the three trainings over the course of the program was an intelligent and strategic decision. The first year's gender training only peripherally considered the issue of women's human and legal rights. By the time women's rights training was introduced in June 2010 (the second year of intervention), there was greater readiness to debate and support greater rights for women and girls. Given the extent to which customary law and tradition gives women only minimal and contingent rights, a rights-based approach at the outset would have alienated both men and women and thus been counterproductive. As the findings of the survey and FGDs

demonstrated, the initiative has been increasingly successful in encouraging a general acceptance of greater rights for women.

5) Depth and extent of coverage

The household survey suggested a near 100% coverage rate in the *collines* surveyed. The final evaluation findings based on project monitoring data suggest a coverage rate of between 60-70%. Either way, this is an extraordinarily high rate level of penetration. This rate is indicative not simply of superficial contact, but of frequent and targeted intervention. In the case of the household survey, nearly all the households had received one visit and most had received at least two.

Equally important is that contact and training had generated some change within the household. In the wider context, the extent and depth of coverage resulted in the early attainment of a critical mass of individuals and households who were sensitized and trained in gender analysis and were applying the new knowledge to make changes. As greater and greater numbers of households were sensitized and changes in gender relations occurred, improved division of labor and decision-making became the new social norms, making it more difficult to opt out. The achievement of this critical mass of trained community members encouraged a domino effect with changes in households occurring with greater frequency as the project progressed.

6) Recruitment of Positive Deviants

Recruiting individuals to be role models was envisaged in the MYAP project design as a general approach. A similar model had been used with other CRS and partner programs, including the MYAP's model farmers and Care Group leaders. The notion behind the recruitment of Positive Deviants was to enroll individuals who had demonstrated that they could turn their lives around by changing attitudes and behaviors to their spouses and become more responsible partners and parents.

Although not fully articulated in the proposal, very shortly after sensitization and training took place, individuals (who either had had an epiphany during the training or shortly after or who had experienced great change as a result of visits from the CGFPs) volunteered to give their testimonies and experience. In effect, there was no "recruitment." The program staffs adroitly neither actively recruited nor asked for volunteers but rather let potential Positive Deviants self-select and offer to tell their stories. Thus, the Positive Deviants were, in the most literal sense of the term, volunteers who actively wanted to give testimony and to be perceived as success stories.

The emergence of a cadre of Positive Deviants also had several benefits for the program and for the work of the CGFPs. The Positive Deviants were known to their communities as frequently drunk, lazy, and prone to violent behavior towards their spouses and children. Thus, the changes that they manifested and about which they gave testimony were trusted.

In addition, very public testimonials had benefits for the Positive Deviants themselves. First and importantly, it provided an opportunity to confess in a safe forum and in front of their neighbors and peers. The Positive Deviants was able to acknowledge his or her previous bad behavior providing a form of catharsis. Finally, public testimonials also acted as a brake to backsliding to

old, bad habits. To have stood up and declared oneself a role model was an incentive to staying on track.

7) Clever and intuitive management

Evaluations are rarely tasked to give attention to the quality of leadership and management of a project beyond the level and capacity of management necessary to deliver program inputs. This is unfortunate, as very able managers and management styles do not always receive the acknowledgement they deserve. In the case of the MYAP gender promotion, one of the core components of its success was the quality and intelligence of its management.

The management of the gender equity promotion component was not top-down but led from the field. This was one of its strengths. The implementation and much of the decision making devolved to one of the then-program animators who later became the official Gender Coordinator. Her experience and commitment to promoting a change in gender relations was a key driver in establishing a sound program and ensuring strong support.

She knew the CARE and CARITAS programs in the area and had confidence that the model was appropriate for the target population. As a member of the MYAP Mobile Team coordinating activities in all the provinces, she ensured that animators from other MYAP provinces were included in the process of planning and deciding on trainers and time. Good communication and collaboration meant that preparation for the training, involvement of the *chefs de colline*, and selection of the CGFPs was timely and coordinated. Good groundwork had not only prepared all parties but created an overall readiness for the training.

The principles of respect and collaboration were repeatedly cited as one of the reasons for the success of the initiative. The CGFPs particularly believed that their success in winning the respect and trust of their communities and in successfully training and intervening in family disputes was as a result of the example set by the Gender Coordinator and facilitator. Staff and CGFPs were trusted and expected to work hard and well.

By the same token, the Gender Coordinator and facilitators also received the support and respect of the program management team.

8) Respect for the autonomy and competence of the CGFPs

In some ways, respect for the autonomy and competence of the CGFPs is part of good and effective management. However, it is particularly noteworthy in the broader discussion of sustainability and possible locally organized scale-up. From the outset, the CGFPs were trusted and presumed to be able to organize and manage their work alongside the facilitators. The assumption that work would be done conscientiously and thoroughly bred a culture of hard work and independence.

The CGFPs could easily have slowed down their efforts, not visited every household and not done as regular a follow up and still have been regarded as having done very good and committed volunteer work. That the majority went well beyond what was expected is a measure of two things: one, that the CGFPs had been given the autonomy to feel confident that they were doing a good job, and two, that this autonomy had encouraged and bred a complete sense of ownership of the program.

9) Healthy neglect

As program implementers know, judging the right amount and frequency of contact between program staff and community counterparts is a difficult skill. Too little contact can lead to a loss of direction and enthusiasm which in turn can slow down activities and take away momentum, and too much contact and attention can lead to a loss of autonomy and independence which can also affect project activities.

From discussions with the CGFPs and the Gender Coordinator, there were periods where the CGFPs were left to complete their work and simply deliver their monthly reports. At various points during the project, the Gender Coordinator was required to take over other duties leaving little time for regular field visits. This “healthy neglect” came at the right time and reinforced the sense among CGFPs that they were judged fully capable of managing their work. It proved to be one of many demonstrations of trust and mutual respect.

10) Inclusiveness of the design

The design of the gender equity promotion component is not original. Promoting changes in gender relations is a well-recognized and an effective means of improving household food security and increasing household assets. It has been variously implemented by INGOs, FBOS and NGOs with different degrees of success in different settings. One organization, for example, had provided training and access to credit, but only for couples who were members of an association. Other examples include couples receiving farming inputs after completion of gender and development training.

What sets the MYAP gender promotion apart is the inclusiveness of its design. No conditions were imposed or particular groups targeted. Everyone was able to access training and counseling. This was noted and appreciated by key informants and, in the context of communities who have lost morale and feel discriminated against, this was more important than perhaps was realized.

11) Immediacy of results

Couples and households quickly noticed palpable changes in their lives and their sense of well-being after changing their habits and behavior and beginning to share work, assets and decision-making. This was the spur for greater change and the adoption of similar behavior by friends and neighbors. Increases in household assets and resources as a result of better planning and joint decision-making was undoubtedly aided by the other technical support and resources that the MYAP brought to the community, such as improved varieties of seed, hybrid goats etc. Nevertheless, the quick returns on efforts to change behavior and improve household management greatly aided the gender promotion efforts.

This is important in relation to the initiative being replicated in other settings. Extreme and entrenched poverty tends to breed a kind of hopelessness. Individual efforts to break out of poverty are often futile and people become easily discouraged. Interventions which offer quick and tangible results can be catalysts for other more complex and demanding changes.

5.2 Characteristics of the population

While the design and implementation of the gender component is to be commended, the extent of the success is also attributed to the readiness and the willingness of the target population to adopt radical changes in their behavior and relationships.

Six characteristics of the target population are identified as either possible drivers of changes in gender relations or as supporting change behaviors.

1) A greatly impoverished and desperate population

Much has been written about the levels of poverty existing in the program areas, but less is written about how people experienced poverty. The consciousness-raising and the training brought about self-reflection and an opportunity to talk frankly about their individual situations and how they and their families lived and coped. During the household survey and FGDs respondents repeatedly referred to their earlier states of desperation, how they felt powerless to make changes, and how they felt “stuck.” This is not to suggest that desperate poverty is a precondition for success but clearly, it acted as a driver for change – a nothing-to-lose and much to gain starting point.

2) A high-level of dysfunction at community and household-level

Even taking into account that people may have exaggerated their pre-MYAP state as being particular bad or anti-social, the testimonies of Positive Deviants and the findings of the household survey suggest extremely high levels of dysfunction in the communities and households before MYAP. Respondents described heavy drinking and drug abuse by both men and women, but mainly men. As noted in the findings, regular and repeated domestic violence was the norm. Intra-household theft of crops and money for personal use were common. Households were generally under-functioning and not providing care and protection for their children.

This describes a state of anomie in which social norms and self-regulation had largely broken down for a significant proportion of the population. This, as CGFPs noted, evoked in them a missionary zeal in their work and an equivalent desire to “save” this particularly alienated portion of the population.

3) An evident lack of self-respect and shame

Inseparable from the above discussion is the degree of shame and loss of self-respect that many people experienced and described in interviews and discussion. One respondent said, “I used to feel like I was at the bottom layer of society.” The desire to regain their self-respect may well have been a key driver of change for many respondents.

The psychosocial dimensions of gender promotion are apparent in the testimonies of Positive Deviants. Many people described self-destructive and demeaning behavior characteristic of depression. In the absence of a psychological discourse in these communities, changing social relations and gender relations in particular was therapeutic activity and evidently led to a greater sense of happiness and well-being.

4) High-level of oppression

In traditional agricultural societies where rigidly-defined gender roles and responsibilities are enforced, it is much simpler to demonstrate how changing those patterns of behavior and divisions of labor would benefit all members of the household. In this regard, the level and extent of women and girls' oppression is self-evident. Working on the assumption that people are inherently just and that they will want to change after being made aware of the degree to which they are complicit in oppressing others, then disproportionately high levels of discrimination and disempowerment of women is a strong stimulus for change.

5) A desire for redemption

Many of the discussions and the testimonies suggested indirectly that there was a need for atonement for the violence and effects of war. This case study argues that the success of this gender activity is partly due to the direct or indirect involvement of the majority of the male population in some form of violence during the civil war years.¹¹ The rise in male dysfunctional and anti-social behavior may be the manifestations of a sense of guilt and shame. The gender promotion process appears to have allowed a form of public confessional and redemption, resulting in renewed social status and pride. The fact that there is visible relief and, to some degree, pleasure in giving testimony to the changes of past behaviors (i.e. "I used to drink and beat my wife, but I am now a good citizen") has its corollary in the Gacaca or *Intahe ku mugina* trials in Rwanda following the 1994 genocide. If this is an unexpected outcome of gender promotion, it is worth examining as having value as a reconciliation and peace-building tool along the lines of the "personal is political."

6) A homogeneous population

It is important to recognize that the population is homogeneous in a number of critical respects. The survey shows that communities are stable with most people having lived their lives in the same *collines* or commune. The population is largely undifferentiated with regard to income, access to land, resources, and education. Simply put, everyone is in the same boat and this similarity and homogeneity made peer sensitization, education and counseling more socially acceptable and easier to establish. A more heterogeneous population might require a more differentiated approach.

5.3 Approach that is replicable?

CRS is interested in learning from this unprecedentedly successful program. One of the questions asked of this case study is how feasible it would be for a similar CGFPs and Positive Deviants approach as a stand-alone intervention. However, there are a number of reasons that this gender equity approach could be less successful outside the context of other technical assistance:

- The access to technical assistance and expertise as well as farming inputs acts as a powerful incentive to making changes and accelerating the rate of change. It is important that individuals see quick returns and benefits to reinforce the value of any changes.
- It is more difficult to ensure the level and depth of coverage and inclusion with a stand-alone initiative. It is clearly important that large numbers of households make changes

¹¹ Insecurity and violence was felt across the country and "16 of Burundi's 17 provinces were subjected to sporadic fighting, looting and armed banditry" <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/burundi.htm>

together so that there is mutual support and encouragement for change rather than the risk of ridicule.

- It is difficult to encourage gender equity promotion as a stand-alone initiative without it being regarded and criticized as ideology and contrary to local traditions and culture, and there is a risk of doing harm.

Annex 1: MYAP Gender promotion - Semi-structured interview questionnaire

Good morning/afternoon/evening.

Thank you for agreeing to speak to us today. Our name are _____ and I am here as a member of We are interviewing men and women in a small sample of households in this community to learn more about your experiences being part of the ... (MYAP project). The answers you provide will be and it is OK if you don't want to answer some questions. This interview should take about 50- 60 minutes of your time and you may stop at any time. At the end, we will write a general report of our findings, but there will be no names or information about individuals in the report.

Your participation is completely voluntary. However, we hope that you will participate since your views are important.

Do you agree to participate? ☐ Yes ☐ No

I certify that this household has received the full information above and has verbally agreed to participate.

Signatures of Interviewers

Date

Section 1: Background information

How many are you in this household: Children – (Number and ages)

Other dependents: -

How old are you? Wife

Husband

How long have you been married? Number of years

Is the marriage registered with the authorities?

If yes, when?

Is this your first marriage? Yes/no

Are you from this village/sous colline? Wife

Husband

If no, how long have you lived here? Wife

Husband

Section 2: Extent of contact project

When did you first hear about the messages about gender equality? Month/ Year
 Who did you hear it from?
 What were the messages?
 Have you received training on gender and gender roles? Yes?
 What kinds of things did you learn from the messages and training?
 What did you learn about women's rights
 Have you received visits in your home from an Acteurs Relais?
 If yes, how many and for what reason?

Section 3 Change in roles and responsibilities of spouses and children – what tasks

Can you describe who does what work in your household now:
 - working in the field? Husband - What tasks? How many hours a week?
 Wife - What tasks? How many hours a week?
Prompts: Ploughing, weeding, planting,

- food preparation? Husband - What tasks? How many hours a week?
 Wife - What tasks? How many hours a week?
Prompts: collecting fuel,

- water collection? Husband - What tasks? How many hours a week?
 Wife - What tasks? How many hours a week?

- Selling/buying in market Husband - What tasks? How many hours a week?
 Wife - What tasks? How many hours a week?

Child care Husband - What tasks? How many hours a week?
 Wife - What tasks? How many hours a week?
 Other
 Have the tasks you do and the number of hours spent doing them changed since you received training or messages from the Acteurs Relais?

If yes, explain Husband - What tasks? What has changed?
 Wife - What tasks? What has changed?

What about your children? What tasks do they do now that they didn't do before?

What tasks do they **not** do now that they did before?

Section 4 - Changes in household food security, accumulated assets and in family dynamics and behaviour.

Can you list some of the changes in your food security or your financial situation since you made changes to the way that you work and live together because of the messages and the training?

Explain and give details of each?

more food prompt for kinds of food and quantity and whether everyone is allowed to eat
assets – prompts livestock, furniture, household improvements
money available for other expenses - prompts – school fees/expenses, clothing, health care

When did these changes occur? Give specific dates and months e.g. ‘able to purchase goat 10/11

What other changes and benefits have you noticed? Can you list them and when you started to notice these changes? *Prompts*: children?

What do you think have been the greatest changes in your household and why?

Do you belong to any community group or group activity?

Wife	Yes/No	If yes, which group, when did you join and why?
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Husband	Yes/No	If yes, which group, when did you join and why?
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